



Harnessing Accountability through External Public Audits

Global Launch Event

November 17 2020 – 8.30 am to 9.30 am EST

The INTOSAI Development Initiative (IDI), the International Budget Partnership (IBP) and the World Bank are convening a global launch of a new report, *Harnessing Accountability through External Public Audits: An assessment of national oversight systems*. The report, jointly developed by IDI and IBP, draws on data from IBP's latest Open Budget Survey to evaluate different aspects of the audit and oversight function in 117 countries and offers recommendations on how these systems can be strengthened.

This event will bring together representatives of supreme audit institutions (SAIs), civil society organizations, international development partners and other public financial management experts to discuss the report's results and critical next steps.

The event will be available in Arabic, English, French and Spanish.

Agenda

Duration: 60 minutes

Moderator: Claire Schouten, International Budget Partnership

8.30 am Presentation of the Report Findings and Recommendations – Vivek Ramkumar, International Budget Partnership

8.40 am Moderated discussion – Two rounds of questions to each speaker on the challenges and opportunities for actors in the audit and oversight ecosystem. Each speaker has approximately 4 minutes to respond to each question.

- Edward Olowo-Okere, Director, Global Governance Practice, World Bank
- Pamela Monroe Ellis, Auditor General of Jamaica and Secretary General for Caribbean Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions
- Hannu Takkula, Member of the European Court of Auditors and former Member of Parliament in Finland
- Dr. Hector Freilij, former director of the National Chagas Program, Ministry of Health in Argentina
- Jay Kruuse, Director, Public Service Accountability Monitor, Rhodes University, South Africa

9.25 am Synthesis and Closing Remarks from the INTOSAI Development Initiative – Einar Gørrissen, Director General, INTOSAI Development Initiative

Questions for speakers

Each speaker will be asked the first question from the list below and provide a response for 3-4 minutes. The moderator can then ask a second question to the speakers, from the list below or from the audience.

Edward Olowo-Okere, Director, Global Governance Practice, World Bank

- The report highlights the interconnectedness of actors in the accountability ecosystem. These actors include SAIs, legislatures, civil society, and of course the executive. How can we strengthen greater engagement between these actors?
- SAIs are sometimes worried that engagement with civil society may compromise their independence. What can be done to foster greater trust between SAIs and civil society?

Pamela Monroe Ellis, Auditor General of Jamaica and Secretary General for Caribbean Organisation of Supreme Audit Institutions

- The role of SAIs in ensuring transparency and accountability of public funds is critical, especially during an emergency. But we also know that governments are busy and distracted during emergencies. How receptive is the government to your work on auditing COVID programs? How about other stakeholders?
- Too often audit reports are withheld from the public, hearings on audit findings take place behind closed doors and findings are not acted upon. What can be done to ensure greater action on audits?

Hannu Takkula, Member of the European Court of Auditors and former Member of Parliament in Finland

- The IBP-IDI report finds that few legislatures worldwide are actively and publicly following-up on audit findings that are submitted to them. How do we incentivize legislatures to take audit reports more seriously, especially in situations under which the executive is from the same political party as prominent legislators?

Dr. Hector Freilij, former director of the National Chagas Program, Ministry of Health in Argentina

- Audit reports are often ignored by governments. How useful have you found reports issued by the national audit office?
- What do you think needs to be done to motivate greater action on audit findings?

Jay Kruise, Director, Public Service Accountability Monitor, Rhodes University, South Africa

- How can civil society use audit reports and amplify the audit findings?
- What can be done to strengthen opportunities for public participation, particularly in challenging situations such as the COVID-19 pandemic?